Violation of FDI norms by Telecom companies

†4962. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been breach of FDI norms by certain foreign companies in telecom sector; if so, the action taken to find out such violation, if any, and the penal action taken against them:

(b) the foreign stake holding in various telecom companies providing services in the country:

(c) whether Government are planning to raise the FDI limit up to 74 per cent; and

(d) Government's stand on the on-going telecom crisis over technology and whether Government are taking any measures to establish a technology neutral office?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No case involving breach of FDI norms in Telecom Sector have been reported so far. As such the question of taking action for such violation does not arise.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) FDI limit in telecom sector is reviewed from time to time depending upon the investment requirements, security considerations and other relevant factors.

(d) The Government is neutral in so far as uses of telecommunication technologies are concerned.

Criteria for Allotment of PCO Booths

†4963. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for allotment of PCO booths;

(b) the number of PCO booths in Bihar; and

(c) the target for opening of more booths during the year 2003 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) PCO booths are allotted liberally to all applicants above 18 years of age.

(b) 43,063 PCOs (STD/ISD/Local) are working in Bihar as on 31-03-2003.

(c) No target has been fixed for opening of PCOs during the year 2003-04 since these are allotted liberally to all eligible applicants. The number of PCOs to be allotted during the year 2003-04 depends on the availability of eligible applicants.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.